

Remarks

The various parts of the Office Action (and other matters, if any) are discussed below under appropriate headings.

Allowable Subject Matter

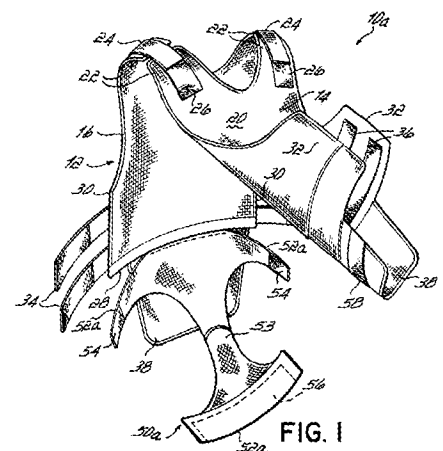
The allowance of claims 4, 5, 11 and 12 is noted with appreciation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102 and § 103

Claims 1-3, and 6-10 have been rejected as being anticipated by or unpatentable over US 6182288 (herein "Kibbee") and US 5909802 (herein "Puco").

Claim 1 recites a clothing article for attaching apparatus with increased availability and better weight distribution. According to claim 1, the clothing article comprises, *inter alia*, a front portion including separate left and right front side portions that are releasably attachable to one another to close the front of the clothing article and which each have a shoulder portion and a waist portion, and a rear a rear portion separate from but attachable by releasable attachment devices to the front side portions. That is, the clothing article includes a left front side portion, a right front side portion separate from the front side portion, and a rear portion separate from the left and right front side portions.

Neither Kibbee nor Puco has been found to disclose a clothing article having front left and right portions that are separate from each other and from a rear portion, but attachable to each other and to the rear portion. The Examiner contends that "[t]he vest [of Kibbee] defines separate left and right front portions connected by releasable attachment (24) with each having a shoulder and a waste portion as shown in figure 1." As seen at the right, Fig. 1 only shows two component parts of the vest, namely a front and rear portion. Fig. 1 of Kibbee does not disclose two separate front portions which are each attachable to the rear portion at both the shoulder and a waist and to each other to close the vest. Kibbee only discloses a front and rear portion. In addition, the attachment 24 does not connect left and right front portions since there is only a single front portion.



Puco does not overcome this fundamental deficiency of Kibbee as a teaching reference. Puco has not been found to disclose a left front portion, a right front portion each of which are attachable to a rear portion at the respective shoulder and waste portions and in which the front portions are releasably attachable to each other to close the front of the vest.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the rejections should be withdrawn.

The dependent claims recite still further features not found in a combination similar to that claimed. Inasmuch as the dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend, the Examiner's comments in respect thereof need not be addressed and this should not be construed to be an acquiescence in the contentions made by the Examiner.

The above comments are also in substantial part applicable to new claim 13, which recites a clothing article including, inter alia, a left front portion having a shoulder portion and a waist portion with an attachment device at each of the shoulder portion and waist portion, a right front portion having a shoulder portion and a waist portion with an attachment device at each of the shoulder portion and waist portion, the left front portion and right front portion separate from one another but releasably attachable to one another, at least one rear portion, having an upper portion and a lower portion with an attachment device at each of the upper portion and the lower portion, the at least one rear portion separate from but attachable to each of the left front portion and right front portion with the shoulder portion of the left front portion attaching to the upper portion of the at least one rear portion.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, request is made for timely issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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